

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **73 Criminal Justice Leaders Back Landmark NJ Policy Limiting Local Entanglement in Federal Immigration Enforcement**

Yesterday, 73 current and former elected prosecutors and law enforcement leaders, and former Attorneys General and Department of Justice officials, filed an *amicus* brief in the United States Third Circuit Court of Appeals in support of New Jersey’s landmark Immigrant Trust Directive – a statewide policy that aims to fortify trust between immigrant communities and local law enforcement by limiting voluntary assistance in federal immigration enforcement activities. As these national criminal justice leaders highlight in the brief, local law enforcement involvement in immigration enforcement can deeply erode public trust and exacerbate fear within immigrant communities, making them less likely to report crimes and cooperate with investigations. New Jersey’s thoughtful policy is therefore essential to promoting public safety.

“At a time when trust between law enforcement and the people they serve is already deeply fractured, local criminal justice leaders should be free to invest in building relationships with the community, not forced to act as immigration enforcers,” said **Miriam Krinsky, Executive Director of [Fair and Just Prosecution](#)** and a former federal prosecutor. “Mandates that entangle local law enforcement in immigration enforcement further erode public trust, compromise the safety of our communities and create more precarious conditions for some of our country’s most vulnerable residents. It is past time for a new vision for our nation’s immigration system: one in which no one is caged, deported or punished for seeking safety, freedom and the American dream. New Jersey’s Immigrant Trust Directive is a critical step in the right direction.”

In the brief, *amici* cite numerous studies showing that immigrants are less likely to report crimes because of fear related to their immigration status, and because of this, they are more susceptible to becoming victims themselves. As *amici* note, “[t]he risk to the perpetrators...is minimal because the victims are often too afraid of adverse immigration consequences to report the crimes to the police.”

“As a law enforcement leader, I have committed to – and take pride in – protecting every member of my community, including immigrants who have come to our country in pursuit of a better life,” said **Washtenaw County, Mich. Sheriff Jerry Clayton**, one of the signatories on the brief. “Putting immigration enforcement in the hands of local officers deters victims and witnesses from reporting crimes and increases the likelihood that these essential members of our community become victims of crime themselves, threatening public safety that I work to advance every day.”

*Amici* further argue that local and state involvement in immigration enforcement diverts critical resources from efforts necessary to promote safer and healthier communities, noting that “complying with ICE detainer requests can add staggering costs—in some cases, tens of millions of dollars annually.” At a time of limited budgets resulting from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is both dangerous and fiscally irresponsible to shift local resources into immigration enforcement.

“The people elected me to promote public safety for everyone in the community, regardless of their citizenship status,” said **Santa Clara County, Calif. District Attorney Jeff Rosen**, another signatory on the brief. “We should be reaching out to immigrant communities, not isolating them by putting individuals and their families in more danger.”

“The attacks on New Jersey’s Immigrant Trust Directive threaten to divert critical resources from efforts to transform the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve,” said **Mary McCord, Legal Director of Georgetown Law’s Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection** and a former federal prosecutor. “Building trust with immigrant communities is essential for public safety.”

Read the brief [here](#), and for a list of *amici*, see below.

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*Fair and Just Prosecution is a national network of elected prosecutors working towards common-sense, compassionate criminal justice reforms. To learn more about FJP’s work, visit our [website](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*

*ICAP uses the power of the courts to defend American constitutional rights and values. Based at Georgetown Law Center, ICAP draws on expert litigators, savvy litigation strategy, and the constitutional scholarship of Georgetown to vindicate individuals’ rights and to protect America’s constitutional way of life. More information about ICAP can be found at [law.georgetown.edu/icap](http://law.georgetown.edu/icap).*

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